

## AN EAR OF CORN

By R.W.Bro. Orville Bailey

From deep in the heart of the African forest, and consequently, spread throughout Asia, China, the Far East, Europe and the America - in fact the entire world - ancient man found the qualities of corn so fundamental and impressive that they looked upon it with great reverence.

It was, indeed, the first grain of food that became a staple diet to man and animals. One single grain of corn, when deposited in the mother's womb (Earth) germinates and produces one stalk, that stalk, in turn, depending on the richness of Mother Earth, produces three-four ears of corn. One ear of corn, according to agriculturists, provides a further five thousand grains. Therefore, one stalk of corn, potentially, provides upwards of 15-20 thousand grains, and this is done in an approximate time span of six weeks. No other grain can compare with this kind of yield. Corn can be prepared in several different ways. An ear of corn, when stored correctly will remain in a stable condition for years on end, and will still be able to germinate or be converted into food when called upon.

It's life cycle is constant; it dies to be reborn. When born it grows, produces its yield, and the stalk returns to Mother Earth, giving back that which it took out in order to produce properly. The stalk, at the same time, provides support for her children when it is their turn to perform the same ritual as their forebearers. While the stalk is performing such incredible labour, the offspring is either nourishing higher life forms, or being preserved for future use.

Surely the careful study of this wonderful grain will instil in anyone looking upon it with great reverence, and indeed, inspire one to emulate it in whatever form or fashion. It takes very little from man, or nature, and in fact gives back in abundance. Indeed this is like God himself. No wonder the ancients, in homage to this God - like grain, dedicated a God-title to it. In ancient Africa, Adonis - the God of vegetation - is actually the Corn-God. As we travel out of Africa and journey from nation to nation (maybe we should say from tribe to tribe, because the settlements were tribes growing into nations), we find names such as Cybele, Astarte, and Tammuz which in fact are the same Gods of Corn, and are thus synonymous with Adonis.

One grain of corn indicates the process of evolution and reincarnation. We die to live and we live to die. Like man, corn is a universal grain. It is amiable to cultivation in any part of the world. The influence of corn is found in the most ancient of writings, including the Bible, either in symbolic or allegorical form. Corn played a great role in the early development of Israel, where Tammuz was their corn God. In Egypt, Syria, Greece, Asia, amongst the Australian Aborigines, in all ancient nations, the God of corn is cloaked in myth and allegory as is so eloquently stated by Ward.<sup>1</sup>

" . . . When next ... you eat a humble slice of bread, pause for a moment and think what we owe to 'an ear of corn'". On the material plane we owe to corn (development of the doctrine of) the evolution of all civilisation in the West. To corn we owe the development of the doctrine of the Resurrection, the hope which sustained millions in the hour of grief, of anguish and of death. For this men have died bravely and unflinchingly, for this they have toiled unceasingly throughout their lives. Above all, to this we owe the most sublime and exalted teaching of the mysteries, by means whereof the mystic learns the secret of the journey back to God, from whence he came. ... Then, brother, the ear of corn will not be to you and empty "shibboleth", but a symbol above all symbols, and you, too, will understand the deep thrill which passed through the soul of the initiate at Eleusis when as the crowning act of the mystery he was shown - AN EAR OF CORN - . . . "

1. J.S.M. Ward, M.A., P.R. Econ. S.F.S.S.P.M. -  
Who was Hiram Abitt? P. 244. 4th par.

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Published in: Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the  
Caribbean Commemorative Journal of the 250th Birth  
Anniversary of M.W.Prince Hall 1748 - 1807.

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